

Rowland Evans

And Robert Novak

Bianca Jagger's Hill Briefing

When Bianca Jagger, the pro-Sandinista activist and divorced wife of rock star Mick Jagger, slipped into the top-secret Capitol Hill office of the House Intelligence Committee early this month to brief two of its staffers, her presence confirmed the committee's politicization. For four years under the chairmanship of Rep. Edward Boland, the Intelligence Committee had shown commendable ability to overcome partisan wrangling that destroyed its predecessor committee under Otis Pike. But that admirable record has crumbled under political pressures of the Central American crisis and a runaway staff. As a result, what is supposed to be a bipartisan watchdog over the intelligence community has become a snapping terrier attacking President Reagan's Latin America policy in behalf of the Democratic Party's left wing.

But the invitation to Jagger, a native of Nicaragua and intimate friend of Sandinista strongman Tomas Borge, may provoke Republican members to prevent the committee from becoming a political cockpit. Suspicious GOP members believe the staff was seeking new arguments from her to torpedo Reagan's Central America rescue plan.

That follows the recent course of the committee. Its Democratic majority has voted, on strict party lines, to kill future covert aid for anti-Sandinista insurgents. Such a partisan lineup on what was established as a nonpartisan panel with a politically disinfected staff causes concern in the White House. The hands of the

committee's Republican minority are tied by its lack of minority staff. In the name of nonpartisanship, the Democrats refuse to give the Republicans any staffers.

Degeneration of the prestigious committee into propagandistic activism became obvious last September when two liberal staffers authored a stinging rebuke to Reagan's CIA. It was so nakedly anti-Reagan that retired admiral Bobby Inman, named by Boland as a part-time committee consultant when he resigned as the CIA's deputy director, quit on the spot. The tip-off to politicization was the accusatory tone of the report, which contended that El Salvador had become a "major focus for East-West relations under the newly elected U.S. administration in 1981." That ignored the fact that aid to Nicaragua was cut off and the communist rebellion in Salvador spread during the last two years of the Carter administration.

Inman says privately that he quit because the committee's staff, behind Boland's back, was converting the committee into a vehicle of "partisan political purposes." Boland, a likable old pol from Massachusetts, is regarded by the committee's GOP members as well-meaning but under relentless political pressure from Democratic liberals. He will need their support to achieve his dream of becoming chairman of the House Appropriations Committee some day.

Boland admitted to us that holding the staff in line is not easy, given the pressures of the ideological split over U.S. policy in Nicaragua and Salvador. "We have problems on the staff and that is hard to avoid," he added. Those problems are rooted in the ideological mindset of Boland's staffers, heightened by the possibility that Reagan's success or failure in Central America affects the 1984 presidential election.

That prospect could end Republican silence about what is happening in the Intelligence Committee. No matter how averse its Republican members may be to a counterattack completely destroying the committee's effectiveness, they are appalled by the current climate.

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LIVERMORE, CALIF.
INMAN

STATINTL

Bobby Ray Inman, the former CIA deputy director, has told officials at Lawrence Livermore Laboratory that he hopes his group can produce the ultimate computer before the Japanese can match it.

Inman, who met with Livermore scientists Monday and Tuesday, heads a consortium of American high-tech firms which hope to compete with the Japanese over advanced computer technology.

Inman welcomes the rivalry.

"Looking 15 years ahead, I see an intense economic competition with our friends and no lessening of military competition with the Soviets," he said Monday.

He maintained that by battling for technological supremacy, America and Japan can strengthen both their friendship and economic power.

And with military expertise becoming increasingly reliant on the computer, the two nations can capitalize on the Russians' "inferiority complex about not being recognized as a superpower," he added.

Inman, who heads Microelectronics and Computer Technology Corp., is trying to recruit scientists who will research and develop the world's most advanced computer. The corporation is a collection of a dozen U.S. firms which have banded together to beat Japan in the high-stakes computer competition.

The companies are committing up to \$150 million annually on the project.

Inman, a 52-year-old retired admiral, said it was the first time that competing American firms have pooled their resources for such research.

Inman noted that the computer industry accounted for \$325 billion in revenue worldwide and 5 million jobs. The United States accounted for about 40 percent of both figures.

Within the next decade, Inman predicted, the industry will reach \$1 trillion and "if we stay on the leading edge, \$500 billion of that ought to be in the U.S."

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STATINTL

The Supercomputer Czar

Bobby Ray Inman brings unique qualifications to his new job as computer czar, not least of which is that he thinks like a computer. As head of Microelectronics and Computer Technology Corp., Inman will have to hold together a dozen competitive companies, go head to head with Japan Inc. and build a massive research effort from scratch, going from zero to \$75 million in seconds flat. If he succeeds, it will be the result of a highly analytical mind honed during two decades of intelligence work. "He has a way of looking for the facts, for the reality of things, rather than coloring the situation," says FBI Director William H. Webster, a bureaucratic ally during Inman's 16 months as deputy director of the CIA. "In a way, that's what a computer does. A computer doesn't have any romance to it. It seeks the truth through an analytical process."

Inman, 52, was not trained as a scientist—he majored in history at the University of Texas—but he spent a career surrounded by computers during his 30 years in the Navy. Working on the staff of naval operations in the early 1960s, Inman became deeply involved in technical intelligence-collection activities and therefore the high-tech world of computers, telecommunications and aerospace. "By sheer happenstance, I got involved in how you make sense of sheer volumes of raw data," he says. "Additional jobs kept coming, and they tended to be more and more complex." He became director of naval intelligence in 1974, deputy director of the Defense Intelligence Agency in 1976 and head of the National Security Agency in 1977. The NSA, which monitors communications throughout the world and cracks foreign codes, not only owns and operates some of the world's most sophisticated computers but also is a leading innovator in computer technology.

Inman was not chosen for his new job for his technical knowledge alone. He

was already America's most respected intelligence officer when Ronald Reagan persuaded him to become deputy director of the CIA in 1981. By the time Inman resigned last year—partly to earn enough money to put his two sons through college, partly because he disagreed with some covert-action schemes—his reputation had soared. Rep. Albert Gore Jr. says Inman's greatest talent is to take complicated issues and "clarify, clarify, clarify." Inman's straight talk and lack of political deviousness made him a darling of Congress during his tenure at the CIA. By naming him, MCC guaranteed itself a friendly ear on Capitol Hill. The consortium raises troubling antitrust questions, but Washington is going to feel more comfortable with the squeaky-clean Inman in charge.

'Eccentric': Inman says his chief role at MCC is the recruiting, care and feeding of scientists. His first task, he says, will be to hire a chief scientist who is not only "somebody in whom I have complete confidence on the technical side," but also someone who is "comfortable with my eccentric way of running things."

That may be difficult: a former associate says Inman's "flash point is very, very low when he is confronted with somebody who approaches a problem in a way that differs from what he prefers." There are fears, too, that he may not put enough emphasis on research. "If [MCC] becomes too development-oriented, to meet the pressing short-term needs of its corporate shareholders, it is going to vitiate [itself]," says Michael L. Dertouzos, a computer scientist at MIT. After 30 years in the military, Inman might find the world of private high tech a bit frustrating at first, but he says he plans a collegial style of management that breaks down bureaucratic barriers—and he can't wait to start. "Intelligence work tends to focus on defining the problem," he says. "You reach a stage in your life when you are interested in the solution of the problem."

JOHN BRECHER with ELAINE SHANNON
in Washington

Inman: The spymaster takes a new guise

Larry Downing—NEWSWEEK

